



SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS

Objectives, Policies, and Procedures

Revised December 19, 2013

INTRODUCTION

The City Council of the City of Rancho Mirage has determined that a special assistance fund shall be set aside each fiscal year for the purposes of allocation to community groups and organizations that provide special activities, programs or services to the citizens of the community.

The number and variety of funding requests made to the City have increased over the years. In order to provide guidance to those groups and organizations that may wish to request funds, City staff in coordination with the SAF Subcommittee has prepared this report, including policies for the allocation of funds.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

The number of requests for funding assistance by community groups and organizations has increased over the past few years. This trend can be expected to continue for several reasons:

- Decrease in or elimination of other revenue sources for human services, especially at the Federal, State and local levels.
- Significant additions to municipal responsibilities that have expanded traditional governmental functions into new areas, such as economic development, affordable housing, and environmental concerns.
- Heightened sensitivity by local government regarding community needs and a high quality living environment, brought about by increased needs and expectations on the part of the citizens.

The combined effect of decreases in resources, expansion into non-traditional areas of government and demands by a more sophisticated cosmopolitan constituency add up to a lively competition for funds and difficult choices for the City Council and the community to face. Refer to Table 1 for areas of concern identified by City Staff that could be potentially addressed through special assistance funding.

TABLE 1
AREAS OF CONCERN
IDENTIFIED BY
THE CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE

UNIQUE POPULATIONS

Youth

- Recreation
- Drugs, alcohol treatment
- Teenage pregnancy

Senior Citizens

- Housing
- Nutrition
- Healthcare
- Transportation

Low Income Citizens

- Housing
- Nutrition
- Healthcare
- Transportation

Special Population

- Victims of domestic violence
- Abused children, senior citizens
- Physically handicapped
- Developmentally disabled
- Learning disabled
- Speech impaired, visually impaired
- The homeless

COMMUNITY ISSUES

Child Care

- Affordability
- Availability

Health Care

- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Affordability
- Alternatives such as home care, hospices
- AIDS
- Access to health care providers

Housing

- Affordability
- Availability
- Tenant rights

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The City of Rancho Mirage has long recognized that services and programs provided by various groups and organizations represent a valued community asset, one that makes Rancho Mirage “livable” in the best sense of the word. A variety of programs and services have had the long-term support of local elected officials and the City Administration.

The City of Rancho Mirage has formalized the process that provides support to community groups and organizations. With these guidelines, a more directed emphasis can be achieved, as all funding requests will be consistently evaluated once a year.

City Staff, City Council and the Community, must continually explore the following questions:

- What areas fall below the desired level of livability? Which are basic? Which should be publicly supported to provide a quality of life for Rancho Mirage residents? Which needs are high priorities? Which can be deferred?
- Which services or programs can correct areas of deficiency? How? What is the relative importance of different services or programs?
- Should limited resources, including funds, be targeted to achieve a maximum benefit or be dispersed among many groups and organizations? How should limited resources be divided between people, such as persons with AIDS or dysfunctional children, and places, like a neighborhood with substandard housing conditions or a fire station? How should public dollars be divided among organizations with a more moderate need where a positive long-term impact can be made and organizations where the need is so great that funds may disappear without signs of positive change?
- How can local government "giving" be reconciled with the goals of private sector support and independence of groups and organizations that need to continue programs and services even without public dollars? How can the responsibility to administer an efficient, effective, non-duplicative program and spend public funds wisely be reconciled with the obligation to be responsive to the needs of Rancho Mirage residents?

Whatever the outcome, these questions must be answered in the context of continual change. With the diversity of Rancho Mirage residents, there will be new problems as well as opportunities to achieve a truly livable community.

ALLOCATING SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS: ALTERNATIVES

Funds that are allocated to community groups and organizations have a symbolic value that generally exceeds the amount of funds available; giving dollars is translated into an indicator of what is important to the community. The task of distributing these funds becomes difficult in a competitive setting where groups and organizations lobby for dollars.

To defuse this situation and give direction to the process, many communities have developed allocations methods based on the approaches explained very briefly below.

- Orientation toward place. Many communities, as well as State and Federal funding programs, opt for an approach that focuses funding on geography, such as a particular neighborhood or a community facility.
- Orientation toward people. This approach represents a focus on special groups of people, such as low-income, elderly, the homeless or unemployed.
- Orientation toward concentration of resources. Communities will frequently focus the maximum available resources on either a place or a special population. For example, a city may commit all special assistance funds to housing rehabilitation activities in one neighborhood, even though other neighborhoods could also benefit from a similar program.
- Orientation toward dispersal of resources. This approach typically legitimizes past historic action on the part of a community. The total funding “pie” will be sliced so that every qualified group or organization seeking assistance can get “a piece of the pie.” Sometimes, when dollars are limited, community groups and organizations are encouraged to work out among themselves who will request assistance and develop “gentlemen’s agreements” related to timing of future requests.

Another form of dispersal is the allocation of public dollars over a number of years, set aside each year for an earmarked organization or project. This is frequently done to accumulate a larger amount of revenue to undertake a more expensive capital project.

These are just a few options that are utilized by communities to allocate special assistance funds. Frequently, a community will use a combination of several approaches.

THE ALLOCATION OF PROCESS AND DECISION

Faced with a wide range of community needs, limited financial resources and a growing number of requests by worthwhile organizations, the City of Rancho Mirage has established special assistance funding allocation policies and procedures that represent a significant choice of direction. Expenditure decisions will then reflect a commitment of limited resources to attain community objectives.

The keystone of this effort is improving the livability of our community for the residents. The City's strategies, as expressed in the policies that follow, are designed to encompass an orientation toward both people and places, in response to community needs and objectives.

OBJECTIVES

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING PROGRAM

The overall objectives of the City of Rancho Mirage special assistance funding program are:

- Protection and improvement of the living environment for the residents of Rancho Mirage;
- Assistance to low and moderate-income households and special population groups such as the elderly, in meeting basic needs; and,
- Enabling residents to increase or improve his/her capacity to deal with problems over the long-term without continuing public assistance.

POLICY SET I

SELECTION OF ORGANIZATIONS

POLICY I-A: Ineligible Organizations

The City of Rancho Mirage WILL NOT consider awarding funds to:

1. A private individual for his/her own use.
2. A private for-profit entity or organization.
3. A political, politically affiliated or political action organization.
4. Private/Parochial Schools.
5. Cove Community Funded Organizations, receiving funds concurrently (during the same fiscal year).
6. Organizations conducting programs that discriminate against individuals or groups based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability or political affiliation.
7. Organizations that do not provide assistance in the Coachella Valley.

POLICY I-B: Evaluation Criteria

The City of Rancho Mirage will give priority to those eligible organizations that meet all five of the following criteria. The organizations can:

1. Present a potential for attracting and sustaining long-term private investment in the organization, once funding by the City of Rancho Mirage has been discontinued;
2. Undertakes as a organizational mission, a program, project or service that if funded in whole or in part by the City of Rancho Mirage, will yield a significant improvement in basic living conditions of the residents of Rancho Mirage;
3. Demonstrates good performance during previous year(s) in serving Rancho Mirage clients (if applicable);
4. Demonstrates a receipt of funding percentage from other sources, other than government sources. Specifically private funding, community funding and individual funding;

AND,

5. Can provide a forecast reflecting any shortfalls that may occur without the City of Rancho Mirage funding.

POLICY SET II

SELECTION OF ACTIVITY OR PROJECT

POLICY II-A: Ineligible Activities or Projects

The City of Rancho Mirage WILL NOT award funding for:

1. An activity, program, project or service that promotes a political viewpoint, provides for a political purpose or causes participants to engage in or otherwise affiliate or express an endorsement of partisan political functions or activities.
2. An activity, program, project or service that is discriminatory, in terms of eligibility to participate, based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability or political affiliation.

POLICY II-B: Eligible Activities, Programs, Projects or Services

The City of Rancho Mirage may consider the award of funds for:

1. The acquisition of real property in whole or in part.
 - A. The real property to be acquired may be land, easements or buildings and other real property improvements.
 - B. The organization shall be required to obtain and maintain a permanent interest in the real property acquired.
 - C. Eligible costs may include: appraisals, legal services, financial services, transfer taxes, property surveying, and moving expenses for the organization.
2. Facilities and Improvements
 - A. Facilities and improvements include, but not by way of limitation: buildings or structures; site improvements such as paving, curbs, gutters, sidewalks and landscaping; improvements to buildings or structures, such as rehabilitation, repair or remodel.
 - B. Eligible activities include: acquisition, new construction, installation of a modular structure, rehabilitation, installation or improvements and moving expenses for the organization.
 - C. The place of business and/or improvements of the facilities funded by the City of Rancho Mirage, whether in whole or in part, shall be open to the general public during normal business hours. However, depending upon the nature of the organization and its mission, the facility and/or improvement may not be required to be open to the general public in its entirety. For example, a facility that remains confidential to protect its clients.
 - D. Reasonable fees may be charged for the use of the facility and/or improvements assisted with City of Rancho Mirage funding, but no such fee shall be charged which has the discriminatory effect of excluding any person based on the person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability or political affiliation.
 - E. Facilities designed for use in providing shelter or meeting the needs of persons with special requirements are eligible for funding. Examples include shelters for abused children or spouses,

hospices for persons with health problems or shelters for the homeless.

3. Public Service

- A. The City of Rancho Mirage may award funds to an organization that provides a public service, including labor and supplies. The public service may involve: education; direct client service, either at place of facility or place of (client) residence; goods or supplies provided to a client; counseling, screening and/or testing of clients or potential clients; other assistance made available to a client as may be determined appropriate.
- B. The public service funded by the City of Rancho Mirage, whether in whole or in part, shall be made available to the general public that meets eligibility requirements, without regard to race or ethnic background, religion or political affiliation.
- C. Reasonable fees may be charged for the provision of the public service associated with City of Rancho Mirage funding, but no such fee shall be charged which has the discriminatory effect of excluding any person based on the person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability or political affiliation.
- D. The cost of operating and maintaining that portion of a facility in which the public service is located or provided is eligible for funding.

4. Planning and Capacity Building

- A. The City of Rancho Mirage may award funds to:
 - 1. Undertake and complete studies, analyses and data gathering.
 - 2. Prepare plans of action, implementation programs or organizational strategy plans.
 - 3. Prepare individual project plans as might be required to undertake new construction, remodeling or installation of a modular building.
 - 4. Prepare environmental analyses as may be required to implement a project, program or service.

5. Administration Costs

- A. The City of Rancho Mirage may award funds to be used to pay reasonable administrative costs of the organization.

- B. Administrative costs may include expenses associated with:
 - 1. Preparing program budgets, work programs and schedules.
 - 2. Evaluating programs.
 - 3. Coordinating activities and programs.
 - 4. Reviewing for compliance with mandated requirements.
 - 5. Preparing reports and other documents.
 - 6. Developing inter-organizational agreements to carry out programs or activities.
 - 7. Selective staff and overhead costs.

- 6. Those Items, Supplies or Miscellaneous as listed below:
 - A. Equipment, furnishings or machinery to be utilized and held in ownership by the organization.
 - B. Improvements to utility systems or flood or drainage facilities to correct deficiencies or protect the real property utilized and held in ownership by the organization.
 - C. Costs of operating and maintaining the real property utilized and held in ownership by the organization.
 - D. Purchase of motor vehicles.

POLICY II-C: Evaluation Criteria

In order to award funding for an activity, program, project or service, the following evaluation criteria shall be applied and satisfied:

- 1. The program, project or service must be consistent with the General Plan and other adopted plans or policies of the City of Rancho Mirage.
- 2. There is a documented need for the program, project or service by the residents of the City of Rancho Mirage.
- 3. The program, project or service is the most effective and efficient way of meeting this need.
- 4. The benefits of the program, project or service clearly outweigh any adverse impacts.

POLICY II-D: Organization's Location and Client Base Priorities for Award of Funds

1. First priority for an award of funding shall be given to those organizations that are located within the City limits of Rancho Mirage and that provide an activity, program, project or service to the residents of Rancho Mirage to such an extent that there is a discernible benefit to the community of Rancho Mirage, either by virtue of the number of Rancho Mirage residents served or the targeting of a special population of concerns faced by Rancho Mirage residents.
2. Second funding consideration shall be given to those organizations that are located within the Coachella Valley that provide an activity, program, project or service to the citizens of Rancho Mirage to such an extent that there is a discernible benefit to the community of Rancho Mirage, either by virtue of the number of Rancho Mirage residents served or the targeting of a special population of concerns faced by Rancho Mirage residents.

POLICY II-E: Type of Activity, Program, Project or Service Priorities for Award of Funds

FIRST PRIORITY

1. First priority for funding will be given to programs, projects or services that address basic living conditions of the citizens of Rancho Mirage, which include:

Shelter

- A. Emergency housing facilities for the homeless.
- B. Removal of architectural barriers to allow accessibility to the existing housing stock for very low, low and moderate-income physically handicapped residents of the City.

Food

- A. Provision of food and other typical household necessities to special targeted population groups, such as:
 1. The housebound, either by permanent physical handicap, temporary illness, and age or other causes of immobility.
 2. Very low, low and moderate-income.

SECOND PRIORITY

2. Second priority for funding will be given to programs, projects or services that improve an individual's or household's health, basic living conditions and capacity to be self-sufficient, which include:

Health Care and Related Transportation

- A. Provision of health care services and related transportation to obtain such services. Health care includes treatment for cancer, HIV/AIDS, mental health, abuse, substance abuse, counseling, and other health care services.
- B. In-home care programs for the chronically or terminally ill.
- C. Hospice care for the terminally ill.

Seniors

- A. Programs for nutrition, recreation, rental assistance, utilities, transportation and related services.
- B. In-home bound care programs and services.
- C. The housebound, either by permanent physical handicap, temporary illness, and age or other causes of mobility.

Children and Youth-Employment-Related and Other Services

- A. Childcare services that enable an unemployed, under-employed or low or moderate-income parent(s) to improve his/her/their economic status.
- B. Transportation related to current employment, including transportation to educational institutions.
- C. Recreational programs.

THIRD PRIORITY

3. Third priority for funding consideration will be given to programs, projects or services that improve the livability of the community but are not, of necessity, related to basic living conditions, which include:

Arts & Cultural

An activity, program, project or service that is cultural in nature (i.e. arts, fine arts, museum, theatre).

Miscellaneous

Advocacy, animals, educational programs or services (not related to employment or job training), energy conservation, and other programs or services deemed necessary to support community groups and organizations.

POLICY II-F: Private and Public Funding, including Leveraging Priorities for Award of Funds

1. First funding priority will be given to programs, projects and services that will be financed jointly by the City of Rancho Mirage and private funding sources over a limited period of time.
2. Second funding consideration will be given to programs, projects and services that will be financed jointly by the City of Rancho Mirage and other public (governmental) agency over a limited period of time.
3. A higher funding priority will be given to programs or projects that make the best use of leveraging of City funds (the least amount of City dollars generates the most corresponding private investment), usually expressed as a ratio. For example, a leverage of 3 to 1 (3:1) indicates that for every dollar of City funding, three of private donations are pledged or appropriated in the organization's budget.
4. In all of the above, further evaluation of the responsibilities of the City, the need for the program, project or service and the benefits derived, as well as the potential total leverage of private dollars to public dollars, may cause adjustments in priorities as deemed expedient and appropriate.

POLICY SET III

FUNDING CRITERIA

Priority will be given in the following order based on the criteria below. The City developed the following funding criteria to maximize the opportunities to nonprofits that may fall into the categories identified below:

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Funding Percentage</u>
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1) Food & Shelter	50%
2) Healthcare	20%
3) Seniors & Children	20%
4) Arts & Cultural	5%
5) Miscellaneous	5%

Maximum dollar amount nonprofit may request:

1) Food & Shelter	\$10,000
2) Healthcare and Seniors & Children	\$5,000
3) Arts & Cultural and Miscellaneous	\$2,500

These percentages may change annually in accordance with the approved budget. The amounts may also change as recommended by the SAF Subcommittee and City Council.

Application Process

Nonprofit will be required to submit an SAF application which will be mailed by staff after approval of fiscal year budget. Nonprofit shall meet application guidelines and submit all documents outlined in application.

Application shall be submitted by the due date stated in the letter mailed to nonprofit. Failure to submit application during the open enrollment period will be considered forfeiture to submit. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

POLICY SET IV

SAF DISCRETIONARY FUND

Twenty percent (20%) will be set aside for discretionary fund. This figure was previously approved on June 20, 2013 as part of the budget. Percentage and/or amount may change in accordance with SAF Subcommittee and City Council recommendation.

CRITERIA

Funding requests submitted after the SAF application process has closed will be considered under the following conditions:

1. Said request is made a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to a City Council meeting.
2. Upon receipt of a letter from a nonprofit, Staff will request that applicant complete a written application for SAF Subcommittee evaluation and provide proof of current 501 (c) 3 status and all other required documents within five (5) days of receipt of application. The Special Assistance Funds (SAF) Subcommittee will evaluate application and provide recommendation for City Council consideration.
3. Maximum request to be five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00). SAF Subcommittee may recommend to the City Council a specific amount not to exceed said maximum figure. Award amount will be at the discretion of the City Council.

POLICY SET V

CONTRACT FOR PROGRAM/SERVICES

If nonprofit is selected for a Special Assistance Fund award, the nonprofit will be required to enter into a contract for services ("Contract"). Notwithstanding anything else to the contrary, should the Special Assistance Fund award be for an amount of \$5,000 or less, the award shall be treated as a mere grant and the nonprofit shall not be required to enter into a Contract. In lieu of such Contract, the nonprofit must enter into an indemnity agreement with the City through which it will agree to indemnify and hold the City harmless from certain damages, liability or claims, as set forth under the "Hold Harmless" section of the Contract. Through the indemnity agreement, the nonprofit shall also agree to conform to the Contract "Budget" (Exhibit "B" of the Contract) and also submit receipts to the City evidencing that the Special Assistance Fund award is utilized for the purposes for which such fund is awarded to the nonprofit.

SAMPLE CONTRACT ATTACHED